# LEARNING TO SWIM

## HOW NEW YORK WOMEN ARE TAUGHT THE ART.

### The Overcoming of Fear the First Qualification Absolutely Necessary —One Pupil Tells of Enjoyments Procured by a Few Lessons.

The only place in the city where swimming is scientifically taught to women, so far as careful search could determine, is in the basement of a building uptown, says the New York Sun. Here a stalwart English woman, with muscles trained to steel-like texture, laments over the lack of space at her disposal and does the best she can with ambitious pupils.

Six strokes will take an average swimmer across the tiny pool, and at first sight it would seem a mockery to attempt to teach an art which more than any other demands plenty of space and breathing room. But

Coun Do Only the Six Strokes.

the science of swimming, it seems, can be taught in space that would bring contempt to the heart of an agile gold fish.

"If you can swim around this pool you have taken twelve strokes; if you can take twelve strokes you can keep on and take twenty-four; by the time you have taken twenty-four strokes without assistance you have mastered the greatest difficulty," says the instructor.

"And that is?"

"The innate fear, the lack of confidence. As soon as that is overcome the rest is easy."

The aptest pupils, according to the English swimmer, are those who the most quickly conquer their dread. To teach the stroke is the easiest part of the lesson.

"One in whom this dread is not abnormally developed can be taught to keep afloat and make some progress in ten lessons. Twenty lessons makes an expert swimmer of one, and after that a pupil may be taught all sorts of fancy strokes, the Indian, or trudgeon, the English or the American racing stroke, the dog stroke, to turn somersaults and even to dive.

The water in the pool is at a temperature of 85 degrees, while the temperature of sea water is rarely above 75. This increase of warmth permits a longer stay in the water, but the pool lacks the stimulus of the salt, which makes swimming in the ocean so much easier than in lake or river, or, in fact, any fresh water.

"I always teach the new pupil to swim on her back first," the teacher announced. "You see it is comparatively easy for a woman to learn to float. All she has to do is to straighten herself out and remember that she can't sink even when she feels the water creep up over her face. It will never cover her mouth and nose and if she doesn't move she is all right.

"As soon as she has learned to float she can easily be taught to move her hands and feet a little and then a lit-

One of the First Strokes.

tle more until she has mastered the breast stroke, which is the easiest of all."

"What do you think is the most graceful stroke for a woman?"

The teacher gave an exhibition of the side stroke, which to the onlooker certainly possesses merit of grace which the forward or breast stroke does not. More of the head is above water, the motion is more plainly visible, and that long, outward sweep of the arm which makes swimming a delightful exercise to watch is there seen at its best.

The Indian or "trudgeon" stroke was then given. Next, the teacher turned forward and back somersaults, turned over in the water as if she were rolling down a glassy slope and enjoyed it, too. It was wonderful what could be accomplished in the little space at her disposal.

There are many motives leading one to learn to swim. One woman frankly admitted her method of procedure.

"I was dreadfully afraid of the water," she said. "Always have been so afraid that I simply could not make up my mind to go in, although I missed many a good time.

"One day I went to the swimming school and there acquired enough confidence not to scream when I found that my toes would not touch. I only took ten lessons, but that was sufficient for my purpose.

"The next time I was invited to take a swim of course I didn't apparently know any more than I ever had, but begged one of the men to teach me. There is nothing a man likes quite so well as to teach a woman to swim. Said he to me:

"'You must have perfect confidence in me, trust me,' with an accent on the 'trust.'

"I turned my eyes toward him with a look of absolute confidence. I had learned it of the little English woman at the swimming school.

"'You won't let me drown?' I asked pleadingly.

"There was another girl, but she stood shrieking on the shore.

"'Brave little woman!' he remarked as we plunged in and started for the raft.

"I put one hand on his shoulder and used my other arm and feet as propellers as he told me, and when we reached the raft and he lifted me tenderly on it, he said:

"'I'll make a swimmer of you yet.'

"Of course, it wasn't up to me say anything, but I did smile when I saw my rival in her silk bathing suit—mine was only mohair—standing in the water up to her knees and looking with longing eyes toward us. It had only cost me $15 to get that advantage.

"Coming back I did feel a little afraid. The tide had risen and it was quite a distance from raft to shore. You know the way the sea surprises you sometimes. I clung to him and he soothed me gently.

"When we finally reached shore, he said:

"'Do you know I like you better in

In the Dressing Room at the Swimming School.

the water than I ever have anywhere else; you always seem so sure of yourself and have little opinions of your own and don't need to be told things, but you were just adorable in the sea. A man does like a woman to have confidence in him, if a woman only understood that a little better.'"

### Tale of a Horse.

There was much talk in Berlin when it became known that Emperor William, on the occasion of his recent visit to Rome, had taken with him his saddler. Now, however, a satisfactory reason has been given. The Kaiser, it appears, ordered that only one of his horses should be sent to "the Eternal City," and it happened that the horse selected for this purpose had a short tail.

The Emperor became aware of this fact at the last moment, and, thinking it very probable that he might desire to wear his hussar uniform in Rome, in which case he could not appear in public thus arrayed on a horse with a short tail, long tailed horses being indispensable to huzzars, he at once ordered his saddler to accompany him, and to bring with him a long artificial charger at such times as it became desirable to hide its short caudal appendage.—Ohio State Journal.

### Immense Apartment House.

One of the largest apartment houses in Connecticut has just been completed at Hartford. It consists of seventy-five apartments, varying from one room and a bath to eight rooms and a bath a public dining room, public reception room, ten servants' rooms and a liberal supply of private storage rooms.

### Twins Born in Dublin.

Irish women can boast of having twins more frequently than any other women in the world. Twins are born in Dublin about once in every fifty-two births, as against a general world average of one in eighty.

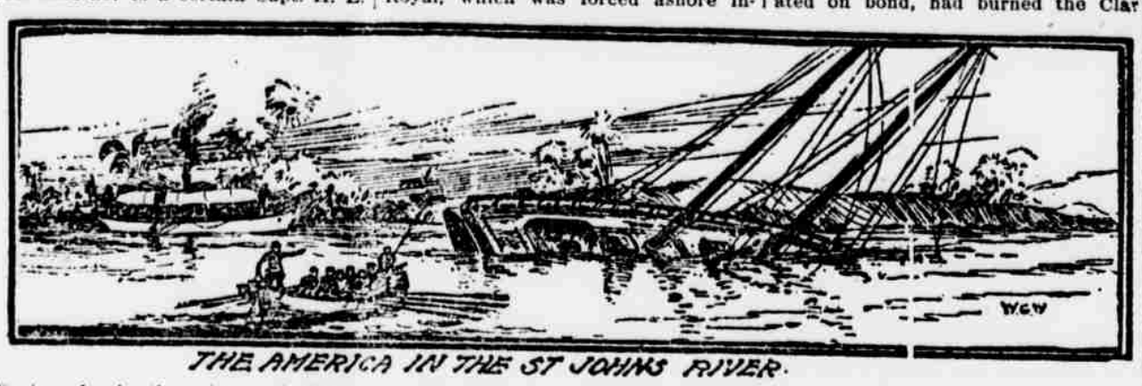
# FAMOUS YACHT AMERICA DID UNION CAUSE GOOD SERVICE

Travelers on cars crossing the bridge between Charlestown and Chelsea, Mass., are often astonished to see some passenger fix an earnest gaze on an old schooner yacht that lies with a cover of boards over her deck, alongside the north pier at the bridge draw. The gaze of the interested passenger is so intent, and his look lingers on the old vessel so long that the other passengers wonder what there is about the craft to cause such an eager regard.

Sometimes they learn, and all then gaze, if in time, for the vessel is the most famous yacht afloat, being none other than the America.

For a number of years the America's winter berth has been at Chelsea bridge, and this year, not having been placed in commission by her owner, Butler Ames of Lowell, she has has spent the summer there also.

After racing for the cup that bears her name, in August, 1851, the America was sold by her American owner to an English yachtsman, Lord John de Blacquiere, who used her a couple of years and sold her to Lord Templetown of the Royal yacht squadron. In 1859 she was bought by a builder, who rebuilt her, and in the winter of 1860 sold her to a certain Capt. H. E. Decie, who in the winter of 1860-61 cruised in her in the West Indies.



THE AMERICA IN THE ST JOHNS RIVER.

The result, and possibly the motive, of this cruise may be judged from the fact that in April, 1861, the America arrived at Savannah. She lay for some time in the Savannah river, while Capt. Decie was entertained by prominent confederates. Then she disappeared and her captain with her.

Capt. Decie had sold the vessel to the confederate government, and her first service was to carry Edward Anderson, a former United States navy officer, to Europe, as an agent of the confederacy, authorized to order gunboats and arms and fit out blockade running steamers.

Anderson's mission was entirely successful, and it was not until October, 1861, that the government was apprised of the service to which the America had been put by the confederates.

By that time plans were being perfected for tightening the blockade of the southern coast, and Admiral Samuel F. DuPont, in command of the South Atlantic blockading squadron, was apprised of the possibility of the America appearing on the coast as a blackade runner or dispatch boat.

In March, 1862, DuPont organized an expedition to seize the ports of eastern Florida. Lieut. Thomas H. Stevens (afterward a rear admiral, and now dead), was assigned to take his ship, the Ottawa, and some other light draft vessels, across the bar of the St. Johns river, to move against Jacksonville. That city surrendered March 12, without opposition, and Lieut. Stevens, hearing that there was some valuable shipping sunk up the river, pushed on with smaller vessels to find it.

His quest was highly successful. According to his official report, a boat was sighted near Palatka from which two men fled to the bank. In this boat was found a letter signed by a person named Hemming, giving a report of the sinking of the America, by the writer, at Dunn's Creek, 140 miles above Palatka.

Lieut. Stevens took a steamer and two launches from the Wabash (DuPont's flagship, now a receiving ship at the Charlestown navy yard), and proceeded to the point described in the letter.

Here the America was found sunk in three fathoms of water, her port rail being out. Auger holes had been bored in her planking to cause her to sink.

After a week's work, Lieut. Stevens succeeded in raising the vessel. She was towed by the Ottawa to Port Royal, S. C., the base of the blockading squadron, and there was fitted with new sails and armed with three guns.

On the 19th of June, 1862, the America went into commission as a United States vessel, attached to the South Atlantic blockading squadron.

During this period of duty the America was commanded by Acting Master Jonathan Baker, a fearless man, who had entered the navy from civil life and without previous training had made an admirable officer.

One of the most valuable prizes of the war was the steamer Princess Royal, which was forced ashore inside the America's station on January 23, 1863.

THE AMERICA BEING TOWED TO PORT ROYAL S.C.

The America was one of the first vessels to detect her attempting to sneak down the shore on a very dark night. Shots and rockets apprised the heavier vessels of the blockading fleet of the passage of a prize, and the Housatonic joined the America, that, with the schooner Blunt, was sending shot after shot after the blockade runner.

The prize offered no resistance, but was run ashore on Long Island beach, her crew escaping to the land in their boats.

The vessel was saved, with her cargo, which consisted of heavy guns, rifles, gunpowder, army stores and engines for confederate ironclads then building. The vessel also carried English workmen brought over to instruct the confederates in the manufacture of steel-pointed projectiles.

When sold by a prize court of Philadelphia the Princess Royal, with her cargo, brought the government $360,382.61. The prize was converted into a union gunboat.

During the remainder of her stay on the blockade the America was concerned in a number of minor captures. Her post was one of the most dangerous on the blockade, as she was stationed in shoal water, and in the easterly gales that sometimes came up she had hard work to draw off the lee shore to a safe anchorage in deep water.

The famous vessel's service on the blockade ended May 5, 1863, when she started for Newport, R. I., by orders of the secretary of war. She had been pressed into service at Charlestown without having been condemned by a prize court. The officers who had raised her from the St. Johns river wished her to be turned over to the naval academy, as they regarded her with a great deal of sentiment, and wanted the youth in the institution where they had obtained their training to have the use of so famous a craft.

The secretary of the navy therefore ordered her to be appraised and sold. This was done in New York in May 1863, and the vessel was formerly bid in by the navy department for $700, a merely nominal price. The officers interested waived their rights to the prize money on condition that the vessel be given the naval academy and this was done.

The America was put into active service as soon as she was turned over to the academy, by being assigned on June 15, to join in the chase of the confederate privateer bark Tacony, then cruising off the New England coast.

The Tacony, owned in Philadelphia was seized off Cape Henry, June 12 1863, by the confederate hermaphrodite brig Clarence, Lieut. Charles W Reade of the confederate navy, commanding. Reade had been a cadet at Annapolis. He had left the confederate steam privateer Clarence, a prize, on a dare-devil raid along the coast, carrying only twenty men and one small gun. On taking the Tacony he had transferred her crew to another captured vessel, which he liberated on bond, had burned the Clarence, and had set out on the Tacony mounting "quaker" guns from her light spars as he sailed. The Tacony's crew got ashore on the Delaware coast, and warned the navy department of the capture.

Tacony consisted of about thirty vessels, sailing craft and steamers. The America, commanded by Lieut. Theo F. Kane, was ordered to cruise as far south as the coast of North Carolina. She was out ten days, but she met foggy weather, and having carried away her bolstay in a blow, she returned to New York, June 25, without having seen the Tacony.

The Tacony meanwhile had worked up to the Maine coast, burning nineteen vessels on the way. Here, on the 25th of June, southeast of the island of Monhegan, she was burned and her crew was transferred to the schooner Archer of Southport, Me., a captured fishing vessel.

In the Archer, Reade entered Portland harbor, and cut out in the night the cutter Caleb Cushing.

But that is another story.

The America remained in the service of the naval academy until 1873 when she was sold by order of the secretary of the navy to Gen. Benjamin F. Butler. Naval men claimed that the sale was illegal, on the ground that the vessel was not condemned by a board of survey, according to law, and there was but one bidder at the sale. The matter was made the subject of inquiry at a congressional investigation in 1876. The America has remained in undisputed possession of Gen. Butler and his family since 1873.—Winfield M Thompson in Boston Globe.

### Product of Potatoes.

In bulk the world's product of potatoes equals that of wheat and corn combined.

### London's Dead.

Twenty-three acres of ground are needed to bury London's dead of one year.

THE AMERICA ON THE CHARLESTOWN NAVY YARD 1863

# THE ODD CORNER

### The Hen.

Who would not be a barnyard hen,
To scratch and peck and scratch again
To lay a calm egg now and then?

To cackle when the deed is done,
To welter in the dust and sun,
I think would be no end of fun.

To have a comb and yet no hair,
Seems careless, trite and debonair,
And yet I think 'twere good to wear

A vigorous penetrating nose,
And widely radiating toes,
And from-one's-skin-projecting clothes.

Who would not be a barnyard hen,
To scratch and peck and scratch again
For families of eight or ten?
—Arthur Colton in Harper's Magazine.

### A Walled Town in Britain.

In the old days when might was right the city that was walled about was common enough, but there are very few towns in Britain which preserve their walls at the present day. Of those few, undoubtedly the most unique is Berwick-upon-Tweed, the old Border town, which has occupied many a page of the past history of the United Kingdom, and which to this very day enjoys the distinction of special mention as a place apart from the United Kingdom in every royal proclamation issued. Here the old battlements built in the time of Queen Elizabeth remain intact, with all but one of the ancient gateways, and even in some cases the very ponderous gates themselves on their old rusty hinges. In reality there are two walls, the outside and older one, of which now only some fragments remain standing, dating back to the far-off times of Edward the First, who in the great hall of Berwick castle—only a small part of which now remains—decreed that Baliol should be King of Scotland, a decree which, as every schoolboy knows, was soon set at defiance by Bruce and his hardy warriors. On this outer line of the ramparts still stands the tower in which the warning notes of the war bell were rung to denote the approach of an enemy, an object naturally of great interest to all visitors to the town.

### Her Life for Her Child.

Capt. Wells, formerly commander of the metropolitan fire brigade of London, thus describes the bravest deed he ever saw:

"The scene was a fire at an oilshop and house," he said. "A woman and her two children were on the top floor, and without a moment's thought she snatched up one of her children, and, fighting her way down the staircase, through smoke and heat, delivered the child in safety to a person in the street. Then she rushed through the burning shop and up the staircase with a view of reaching her room.

"She must have reached her child, clutched it, and tried to make her way out. But in the attempt the devoted mother was forced back, only to be found dead by our men, who had just arrived. She was still holding her child close to her, and had evidently kept her own back to the flames to protect the little one, while her arms and clothes were tightly round the little one."

### Cigars at $4 Apiece.

Those who have attended the big banquets at Delmonico's, such, for instance, as the one given to Cyrus Field upon the completion of the Atlantic cable, and which cost $50 a plate, had the privilege of smoking the choicest Havana cigars, costing perhaps fifty cents apiece. But what would the dinner cost with cigars at $4 each? Yet there are such cigars being made in Havana to-day, and some have arrived in New York. Francisco E. Fonseca, a friend of President Palma, and who was born near where he lived in Cuba, received one of these a few days ago. It was wrapped in a piece of imported Japanese rice paper and inclosed in a handsomely decorated box. In fact, only one comes in a box, and each is sixteen inches long and an inch and a quarter in diameter at the middle. It is said that the tobacco can only be grown on one plantation in Cuba, and the duty on each is sixty-eight cents.

### Horse Commits Suicide.

When Commission Merchant W. K. Cassel went to his stables at Morristown, N. J., recently, he was grieved to find that his most valuable horse was dead and from all appearances the animal had committed suicide.

The horse was lying in a most peculiar position. Its head was beneath its body and from the manner in which it was lying the horse must deliberately have broken its neck. The strap by which the animal had been tied was torn and the horse from all appearances had by brute strength done the act.

Mr. Cassel went for Dr. Dengler, thinking perhaps that life might not yet be extinct, but upon the arrival of the veterinary he at once pronounced the case one of broken neck. The doctor said that the position of the animal was a most peculiar one and that the case seemed like one of suicide.

### Coins Many Centuries Old.

J. F. Bruce of Billerica, Mass., has just received from a missionary who is principal of an academy in Kuching, China, eight historic old coins. The oldest of the coins bears the date of 221 B. C. while the others range between 759 A. D. and 1270 A. D.